

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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P 091546Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7486
AMCONSUL BELIZE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 3699

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, PBOR, SHUM, OAS, BH, ES, GT, US, HO

SUBJECT: HONDURAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER'S REACTION TO VISIT TO
THE UNITED STATES

REF: (A) STATE 179018, (B) STATE 184775

SUMMARY: VICE FOREIGN MINISTER CALLEJAS TOLD CHARGE ON AUGUST 8 THAT
HE IS VERY PLEASED WITH HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON LAST WEEK AND WITH
THE

"POSITIVE" NATURE OF HIS TALKS WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS. HE WAS
ENCOURAGED BY DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT OF THE PROSPECTS FOR DISCUSSIONS

BETWEEN GUATEMALA AND BELIZE AND BY REACTION TO HIS PROPOSAL THAT US
TAKE MORE ACTIVE INTEREST IN RESOLUTION OF HONDURAS-EL SALVADOR
DISPUTE.

HE WAS ALSO PLEASED BY DEPARTMENT'S ASSURANCE THAT U.S. WILL NOT STAND

IDLY BY IN EVENT BLOODSHED OCCURS AS RESULT OF DISPUTE OVER BELIZE
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AND

BY IMPLICATION IN EVENT VIOLENCE RESULTS FROM HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR
BORDER PROBLEM. HONDURAS WILL PROCEED TO RATIFY PACT OF SAN JOSE.
END SUMMARY.

1. I CALLED ON VICE FOREIGN MINISTER POLICARPO CALLEJAS AUGUST 8
TO ELICIT HIS IMPRESSIONS OF HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON LAST WEEK, AND

TO REITERATE OUR REQUEST THAT HONDURAS RATIFY THE PACT OF SAN JOSE.

2. CALLEJAS TOLD ME HE IS VERY SATISFIED WITH HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND HIS CONVERSATION WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DEVINE AND OTHER ARA OFFICERS. HE CHARACTERIZED THE CONVERSATION AS "POSITIVE." HE SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT OF THE PROSPECTS FOR DIRECT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN GUATEMALA AND BRITAIN AND THE INTENT OF BOTH PARTIES TO SEEK A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE BELIZE QUESTION. HE SAID THAT WHEN BRITISH AMBASSADOR KEITH HAMYLTON JONES (WHO IS ACCREDITED TO HONDURAS BUT RESIDENT IN COSTA RICA) WAS IN TEGUCIGALPA JULY 14, HE INFORMED THE GOH IN SOME DETAIL OF THE BRITISH

PROPOSAL FOR SETTLEMENT OF THE QUESTION AND GUATEMALA'S COUNTERPROPOSAL

CALLEJAS SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT BRITAIN COULD NOT ACCEPT THE GUATEMALAN

PROPOSAL BECAUSE IT INCLUDED A DEMAND FOR CESSION OF BELIZEAN TERRITORY

TO GUATEMALA. MOREOVER, IF BRITAIN DID AGREE TO CEDE ANY TERRITORY TO GUATEMALA, CALLEJAS SAID, MEXICO WOULD ALSO DEMAND A PART OF NORTHERN BELIZE.

3. CALLEJAS ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S SYMPATHETIC AND UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS PROPOSAL THAT THE U.S. TAKE A MORE ACTIVE INTEREST IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR BORDER DISPUTE. HE SAID HE REALIZES THAT THE CARTER
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ADMINISTRATION IS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF EVOLVING A NEW POLICY TOWARD

CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN. HE NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THE STATEMENT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION FAVORS A MORE POSITIVE U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO ASSISTING IN ALLEVIATING LATIN AMERICAN PROBLEMS. HE SAID HE CAME AWAY FROM HIS DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON WITH THE FEELING THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION THAT THE U.S. WOULD TAKE MORE POSITIVE ACTION; WHAT NOW HAD TO BE DETERMINED WAS THE MEANS TO IMPLEMENT THIS ACTION.

4. CALLEJAS ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN PLEASED WITH THE ASSURANCES GIVEN (PRESUMABLY IN HIS MEETING WITH DEVINE) THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT STAND ASIDE IF "BLOODSHED" WERE TO OCCUR AS A RESULT OF THE BELIZE

DISPUTE. HE SAID HE ASSUMED THE SAME WOULD BE TRUE BY IMPLICATION IN THE CASE OF AN OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE RESULTING FROM THE HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR BORDER DISPUTE. HE ARGUED THAT RATHER THAN TO AWAIT THE OCCURRENCE OF SUCH A DANGEROUS EVENTUALITY, HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO ACT IN ADVANCE TO PREVENT THIS FROM HAPPENING.

5. I SAID I HAD NOTED FROM THE EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY ACCORDED TO THE VISIT TO HONDURAS LAST WEEKEND OF GUATEMALAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOLINA ORANTES THAT GUATEMALA APPARENTLY HAD ADOPTED A MORE MODERATE PUBLIC POSITION, AT LEAST, AFTER TED ROWLAND'S RECENT VISIT TO GUATEMALA. I ASKED IF MOLINA ORANTES HAD TAKEN THE SAME POSITION IN HIS PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT. CALLEJAS REPLIED THAT MOLINA ORANTES HAD DONE SO, ADDING THAT THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON A MAJOR EFFORT TO DAMPEN DOWN GUATEMALAN PUBLIC OPINION ON THE BELIZE ISSUE SO THAT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BRITISH COULD BE CARRIED ON QUIETLY, RATHER THAN IN AN INFLAMED ATMOSPHERE.

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7487
AMCONSUL BELIZE PRIORITY
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6. I REITERATED OUR REQUEST THAT HONDURAS RATIFY THE PACT OF SAN JOSE, EXPLAINING IN SOME DETAIL WHY WE BELIEVE IT NECESSARY TO BRING THE PACT INTO FORCE. CALLEJAS REPEATED THAT THE GOH WAS RELUCTANT TO DO THIS BEFORE EL SALVADOR HAD RATIFIED THE MEDIATION AGREEMENT. HE ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE SOME TIME BEFORE THE PACT BECOMES EFFECTIVE IN ANY CASE, SINCE ONLY TWO NATIONS HAD RATIFIED IT AND APROBABLY ABOUT FOURTEEN RATIFICATIONS WERE NECESSARY. EVEN THOUGH THE U.S. SIGNED THE PACT IN JUNE, SENATE APPROVAL WOULD BE NECESSARY BEFORE U.S. RATIFICATION COULD TAKE PLACE. I REPLIED THAT I UNDERSTOOD THAT THREE NATIONS HAD RATIFIED THE PACT, THAT ONLY 11 RATIFICATIONS WERE NECESSARY, AND THAT THE PROCESS OF U.S. RATIFICATION IS NOW UNDERWAY, WITH U.S. SENATE EXPECTED TO GIVE ITS SUPPORT. CALLEJAS THEN ASSURED ME THAT IN VIEW OF OUR STRONG INTEREST IN THIS MATTER AND THE POSTIVE REACTION HE HAD

ENCOUNTERED IN WASHINGTON HONDURAS WILL PROCEED TO RATIFY THE PACT. HE ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH THE GOH HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT SEVERAL ARTICLES OF THE PACT, THIS WILL BE SOMETHING THAT THE NEXT HONDURAN GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO CONTEND WITH, SINCE THE GOH BELIEVES IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE THE PACT BECOMES EFFECTIVE.
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7. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT GOH WILL EXPECT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION TO TAKE MORE POSITIVE AND DIRECT ACTION TO ALLEVIATE THE PROBLEMS OF THE AREA, INCLUDING THE HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR BORDER DISPUTE. WE MAY ALSO EXPECT TO HEAR MORE ABOUT HOW THE U.S. SHOULD "REWARD" HONDURAS BECAUSE IT HAS A GOOD RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS. CALLEJAS' PROPOSAL FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE IN ALLEVIATING DISPUTE WITH EL SALVADOR WAS FORESHADOWED BY PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS OF GOH OFFICIALS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, AND IS IN PART A REFLECTION OF GROWING HONDURAN IMPATIENCE AND FRUSTRATION OVER IMPASSE CREATED BY EL SALVADOR'S FAILURE TO RATIFY MEDIATION AGREEMENT.

IF U.S. COULD MAKE DISCREET APPROACH TO EL SALVADOR TO URGE EARLY RATIFICATION OF MEDIATION AGREEMENT THIS MIGHT HAVE SALUTORY RESULT, POSSIBLY LEADING TO A BREAK IN THE PRESENT IMPASSE.
END COMMENT.
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